

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented) A method for provisioning a circuit via a plurality of network elements comprising:

(a) graphically representing said network elements within a network as a plurality of network element objects;

(b) graphically representing a communications link between two network elements as a bridge object disposed between two of said plurality of network element objects;

(c) graphically representing the status of cross-connection links within said network elements as respective icons displayed on said respective network element objects; and

(d) selecting at least some of said network element objects and bridge objects to form a graphical representation of the circuit being provisioned; wherein said selected network element objects are selected by a user, and comprise a start node, an end node and at least one intermediate node between the start and end nodes.

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein for each of the network element objects the icon is selected from the group consisting of a set of colors, a set of images, shapes, symbols, objects, and text.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 2, wherein each icon uses a set of colors and each color of said set corresponds to a particular connection state and cross-connection state within each network element.

4. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein the set of colors consists of a list of seven colors.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein each bridge object has at least one communications link, each communications link comprising at least one channel for establishing a communication path between two of the plurality of network elements.

6. (currently amended) ~~A graphical user interface (GUI)~~ An apparatus for use in provisioning a circuit, comprising:

a memory, for storing a program adapted for generating imagery representing information for use in provisioning a circuit; and

a processor, for executing the program to perform thereby the steps of:

generating imagery comprising a plurality of network element objects, each network element object representing a respective network element within a network and having displayed thereon an associated status icon representing the status of cross-connections links within said network element; and

generating imagery comprising a plurality of bridge objects, each bridge object representing a respective communications link between two of said network elements;

wherein, in response to an indication of a user selection of at least some network element objects, the network elements corresponding to the selected network objects are selected for use in provisioning the circuit; wherein said selected network elements comprise a start node, an end node and at least one intermediate node between the start and end nodes.

7. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 6, wherein each bridge object further comprises at least one communications link object, each communications link object comprising at least one channel object, each channel object representing a communication channel.

8. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 6, wherein for each of the network element objects the status icon is selected from the group consisting of colors, shapes, symbols, objects and text.

9. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 8, wherein the colors represent the status of the cross-connection links within the respective network elements for which the cross-connection status icons are displayed.

10. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 9, wherein a first color represents a cross-connection locally in a management system database not yet set to a network element.

11. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 10, wherein said first color is black.

12. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 9, wherein a second color represents an active cross-connection created by craft terminal interface/element management system CIT/EMS.

13. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of ~~color~~ claim 12, wherein said second color is green.

14. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 9, wherein a third color represents a pending cross-connection.

15. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 14, wherein said third color is gray.

16. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 9, wherein a fourth color represents a partial cross-connection state.

17. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 16, wherein said fourth color is red.

18. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 9, wherein a fifth color represents an improper disconnect state of the cross-connection.

19. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 18, wherein said fifth color is orange.

20. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 9, wherein a sixth color represents an “intent to delete” state of the cross-connection.

21. (currently amended) The ~~GUI~~ apparatus of claim 20, wherein said sixth color is magenta.

22. (new) An apparatus for use in provisioning a circuit, comprising:

means for generating imagery comprising a plurality of network element objects, each network element object representing a respective network element within a network and having displayed thereon an associated status icon representing the status of cross-connections links within said network element; and

means for generating imagery comprising a plurality of bridge objects, each bridge object representing a respective communications link between two of said network elements;

wherein, in response to an indication of a user selection of at least some network element objects, the network elements corresponding to the selected network objects are selected for use in provisioning the circuit; wherein said selected network elements comprise a start node, an end node and at least one intermediate node between the start and end nodes.